SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, the hon. Minister has just now mentioned that everything is now left to the States. But, later on, he did mention that there are some other programmes which are coming under the centre. I appreciate it because it is time when the globalisation of everything in the world is taking place, particularly, of the economy, and the whole world is looking at India. They are watching as so what is happening in sports in a country which has more than one billion people. Now, if we leave it to the States only, I don't think we will be able to handle the world situation. I would like to particularly mention that all those who have reached at the world level in the field of sports have come from the villages. But since they have come from the villages,the States are not taking any interest in it. I can vouch for it that not a single district level area today can claim to have any soprts facility. Unless the Central Government has a special provision for this purpose, it will be very difficult to handle this situation. I know he has mentioned about some plans. But I would like to know what is the time-frame of these plans, and what is the estimated budget for this purpose because, if again the budget is reduced from Rs. 2900 crores of Rs. 480 crores...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री सभापति: ठीक है, ठीक है , let him speak now. You have made your point.

श्री संतोष बागड़ोदिया: मंत्री जी, बताएं कि बजट कितना है।

श्री सभापति: आपने पूछ लिया, वे बता रहे है।

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, I am grateful for the support extended by the Hon. Member to the concept that we have in mind of somehow restoring a role for the Central Government in the sports matters. The point that he has made has been taken into consideration by me and will be transmitted to the Ministers concerned and the Planing Commission. Thank you.

**63. [The questioner (Shri Rudra Narayan Pany) was absent. For answer vide page 34.]*

**64. [The questioner (Shri S.S. Ahluwalia) was absent. For answer vide page. 35.]*

Stricter Visa regulations in developed countries

*65. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Visa regulations in developed countries have been made stricter in recent times;

(b) whether the development has affected Indians proposing to visit these countries on different types of Visas;

(c) if so, whether the Government have made any representation with the Government of these countries in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b). No, Sir. There have been recently no changes in the visa regulations of developed countries, which would indicate that they have become stricter for Indians.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Sir, after the terrorist attacks in the United States recently, it is a fact of common knowledge that many Indians had to suffer at the entry points because the United States is looking at everybody, every Asian with a suspicious eye and several modalities were adopted to make their entry stricter. They were looked upon with suspicion and various restrictions were brought. America being a democratic country, these restrictions might not have come without any amendment to the regulation. Therefore...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please come to your question.

SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Sir, I have not taken even one minute.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You may take three minutes. I have no problem, but ... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Sir, I have just taken one minute, but others are taking three-four minutes.

श्री सभापति: इनकी कॉपी करेंगे क्या?

श्री शान्ताराम लक्ष्मण नायक: सर, मैं उनकी कॉपी नहीं कर रहा हूं even sixty seconds have not passed; sixty seconds, So, I would like to know whether these restrictions which were there and which are facts of common knowledge were brought in without any amendment to regulations of visas.

SHRI E. AHAMMED: Sir, to our knowledge, there is no new visa regulation introduced by any country; especially there is no India-specific restriction. What the hon. Member has said may be true for some people, but it was not because of the visa regulation; it was because of the procedure that each country has adopted for itself. It is possible and there are certain instances of problems faced by some visa applicants in obtaining visa, especially for the US. This has to be viewed in the context of the fact that the number of visa applicants from India has increased substantially in the recent past. Due to the new procedure adopted by some countries, there could have been delays in certain cases. For instance, the USA has introduced finger printing and applicants must dundergo finger printing, which is the cause for delay in many cases. However, this change in procedure is not India-specific. There has been more intense security and scrutiny and interview of applicants by many countries. Consequently, there have been cases of rejection of visa applications. Therefore, the countries are adopting certain procedures taking into account their security concerns. There are absolutely no visa regulations introduced by these countries that are India-specific.

SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Sir, a country may impose restrictions or amend visa regulations; there have been such instances in the past. May be in recent years, as per the Ministry, there are no changes, but as and when these regulations are amended and they are made stricter, has the Government of India made any representation, and if so, in which country?

SHRI E. AHAMMED: Sir, there are certain mechanisms. For EU countries, there is a consultative mechanism. In respect of other countries, whenever there are bilateral discussions, we raise the matter. We have also taken up many issues with the Government of the United Kingdom. There was also the Round Table held in Goa regarding certain problems faced by our people visiting the United Kingdom. So, there is an institutional mechanism to take up the matter with the country. It is mainly on reciprocal lines.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question. Q. No. 66.